

**James Drake:  
Place And Passage**

**gallery  
one**



## **James Drake: Place and Passage**

September 15 - November 11, 1990

This exhibition is made possible by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Abramson Family Foundation, Katherine Meier and Edward Lenkin, the Friends of the Corcoran, the FUNd at the Corcoran, the Cowles Charitable Trust, Citicorp/Citibank, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Carr, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Miller, Michael Abrams and anonymous donors.

Color reproductions in the exhibition catalogue are courtesy of Fendrick Gallery, Washington, D.C.; Barbara Fendrick Gallery, New York; Adair Margo Gallery, El Paso; Arthur Roger Gallery, New Orleans; and Texas Gallery, Houston.

© 1990 The Corcoran Gallery of Art

The Corcoran Gallery of Art  
17th Street & New York Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20006

## **Related Event**

### **Artist's Talk**

James Drake

Thursday, October 11, 1990, 6:30 p.m.

James Drake will discuss his work. Lecture in the Frances and Armand Hammer Auditorium. Call 638-3211, extension 322 for ticketing information.



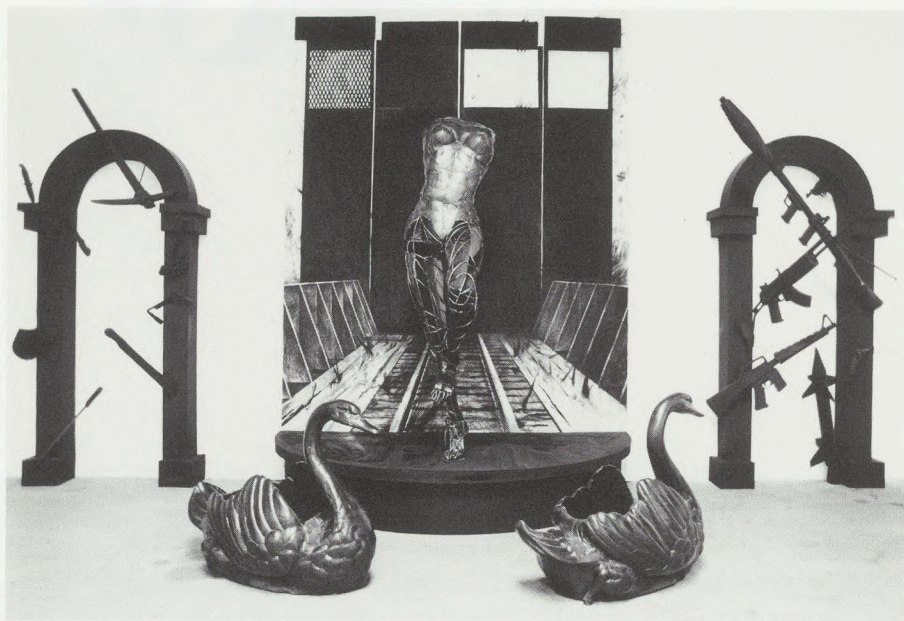
# gallery One

James Drake creates on a massive scale that belies the intimate content of his art. While aggressively confrontational in terms of volume and form, the strength of his sculptural ensembles comes as much from their revelation of luscious, often highly sensual interior elements as from their deliberately intimidating physical presences. Drake bases much of his imagery on experience, translating the specifics of place and individuality into a generalized evocation that is reinforced by diptych and triptych compositions, associative images and titles, and more recently by abstract color panels. Psychologically complex, his messages affect visual communication by relying on the ability of viewers to broaden the specific terms of his thematic concerns--transition from a known place to a new location, or the contrast between the exchanges of strangers and the dialogue of intimates--into a more universal perspective.

Drake's primary conflict is one of opposites, and his metaphors are deeply rooted in the paradoxes inherent in life in El Paso and Ciudad Juarez--border communities separated by the Rio Grande, the shared boundary between the United States and Mexico. Well-fed, suburban households and interchangeable commercial facades characterize the most recent incarnation of the American city of El Paso, offering a harsh contrast to Ciudad Juarez, the roiling, teeming city of 1.5 million immediately to the south. The ironic contrasts between well-to-do El Paso and impoverished Juarez are most visible from the freeway. From this, the most widely used overlook onto Juarez, the multi-faceted city seems to dissolve into the steep hills of the Guadalupe mountains, demarcated only by the combination landmark/admonition "*LEA LA BIBLIA. ES LA VERDAD*" (Read the bible. It is the truth) inscribed on the highest peak in painted white stone letters. Nevertheless, El Paso and Juarez remain cities linked by a symbiotic relationship--commercially interdependent, they are also culturally intertwined. In the midst of the abundant overt transactions that are evidenced by continual border crossings, however, there is a sub-text of denial and avoidance between North and South. This conflict serves as the impetus for Drake's art.



"My work is grounded in very personal values. There is a very formal, monolithic structure around the images, and often people expect that the images will be formal, or that [my] color selections are based on formal decisions. But it all has to be personal to mean something to me. It has to mean something to me first, before I want to do something about it."<sup>1</sup>



*Juarez/El Paso*, 1986-1988 (detail)

Previous bodies of Drake's work have dealt more literally with distinct narratives concerning ideas of transition and separation. For example, in *Juarez/El Paso*, 1986-1988, the artist examined the social, political and human ramifications of the death by suffocation of eighteen men, who, placing their trust in a "coyote" (a courier hired to ferry them safely across the border) were instead locked inside a boxcar and left to die. Three dimensional sculptural representation of the figure, fashioned from welded steel, is a strong aspect of this work. In *Juarez/El Paso* the central figure--headless and armless--seems to explode from a space suggestive of both a boxcar interior and a covered railroad bridge. *Raft of the Medusa*, 1988, was based on a similar theme, but the impetus comes from Drake's interest in and regard for Théodore Géricault's famous painting of the same title (1818-1819), which he saw in the Louvre in 1973. Like the men in the boxcar in *Juarez/El Paso*, the strangers in *Raft of the Medusa* are forced to assume a common identity because of the extreme circumstances of their position. Juxtaposing a charcoal rendering of the Géricault painting with massive steel panels and monumental figures that symbolize the men in the boxcar, Drake reinforces the universality of human degradation.



*It is 104 degrees as we drive across the border that separates El Paso from Ciudad Juarez. It is a trip that James Drake has made many times in the course of 25 years of living in this border city--sometimes as many as three times a day. Once through the Mexican checkpoint we drive along a road which parallels the Rio Grande. Desultory groups of men loiter along the river, leaning on fences or sitting in sparse shade. Drake describes these men as "waiting to go over." He points out the puente negra, the immense, black steel gates that slice through the railroad tracks like guillotines, separating the two countries at critical junctures of trade. A home-made ladder is propped against one gate, bright yellow wood against hot black steel. I wonder why anyone would choose such a dangerous passage when so many easier ways across the border are in evidence.*

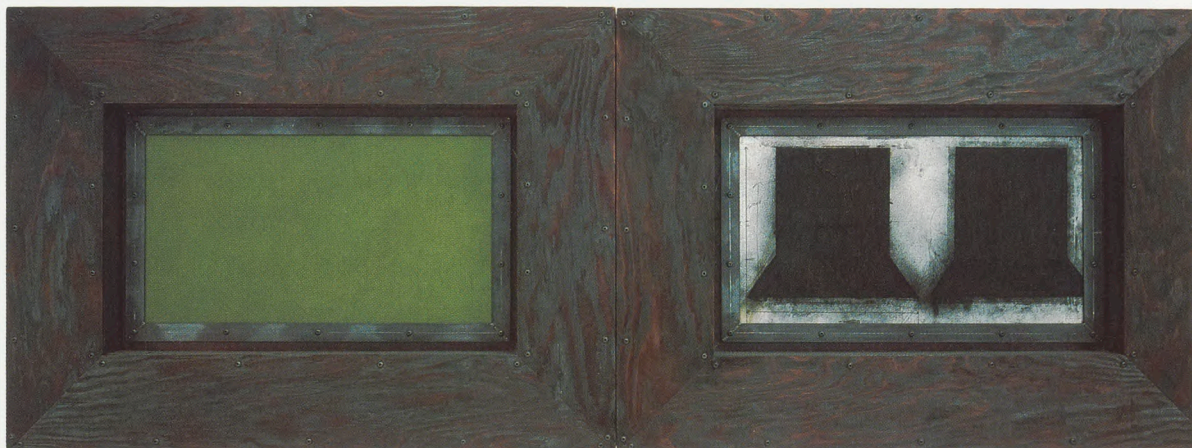
Drake's most recent body of work is much less specific in detailing human experience through figurative poses. Instead, it increasingly relies on the concreteness of metaphoric juxtapositions to continue the artist's study of opposites *in extremis*. While the *puentes negras* are strikingly beautiful sculptural forms, their context defines them as oppressive and intimidating, posed in a confrontational stance that says forcefully and directly: *NO*. For Drake, these harsh gates are the ultimate iron-willed border guards: unlike the highway checkpoints, there is no mitigating human element to temper reality. Drake's *Puente Negra*, 1989, undermines the impenetrable nature of these steel gates through a stereo-optical juxtaposition of drawing and field. Framed by bands of steel (which are in turn inset within massive frames of scorched wood that recall creosote-soaked railroad ties), these images frustrate our temptation to view them as windows on reality. They are perhaps more properly seen as fences, boundaries through which the viewer has to cross to gain a fuller perspective. Pastel is rubbed into the tooth of the horizontal paper rectangle on the left panel, forming a carefully composed, almost military green. While abstract, it immediately connotes the fear instilled by the uniformed presence of border guards. The emotive abstractness of this component finds its jarring opposite in the double rendering of the railroad gates in a dense, velvety matte black composed of plastic roofing cement and charcoal. The smooth, monolithic austerity of the green field contradicts and complements the



*Raft of the Medusa, 1988*



authority implied by the rich impasto of the double rendering. Drake's combination of these materials illustrates the paradoxical nature of his concerns: playing traditional artists' materials against the more mundane utility of construction products, his work consciously fashions a meeting place between high and low, hard and soft, organic and artificial, utilitarian and useless.



*Puente Negra*, 1989

*"At night Avenida Juarez is both romantic and raunchy. Avenida Juarez is the main strip of the town, and the road that leads to the border crossing. Anything can happen on Avenida Juarez. I've been over there at night many, many times, and that blue, that nocturnal color, represents my feeling of night on that particular street. It's a street of possibilities."*

Each section of the equally proportioned steel-framed panels that comprise *Avenida Juarez*, 1989, is increasingly complex in the completeness of its representation. Unfolding from an abstract color panel on the left to a disjointed black and white representation on the right, *Avenida Juarez* is a non-specific narrative that references Drake's impressions of life and popular culture in this border community. The rough, scorched plywood of the central panel, suggestive of railroad boxcars and transient life-styles, plays against the expectations developed by the delicately textured blue pastel on the one hand, and a representation of lovers on the other. On the lower portion of the plywood are two rectangles: one black (negative), attached to the panel, one made of an unburned section (positive), as if something had been there and subsequently been removed. The rough-hewn bag that hangs suspended from the steel rod jutting out from the center panel contains secreted contents, but while the contents are purposefully indeterminate, its form recalls a hobo's kit bag, or a railroad mail-drop bag. Within the context of the El Paso landscape, however, it also suggests the bags which immigrants use to transport their essential valuables on journeys across the border.



"Alameda Park is in Mexico City where we lived for a while when I was young. When I was about fourteen, we stayed at the Hotel del Prado. In the Hotel del Prado is a monumental mural by Diego Rivera. Part of the mural shows Rivera dressed as a boy, holding hands with a cartoon skeleton and surrounded by his wives and family. Many famous political figures are depicted. It's a very complex picture full of symbolism and political commentary. I used to sit, literally for hours, and stare at that mural and think: someday I am going to be an artist. The name of that painting is *Dream of a Sunday Afternoon in the Alameda*. Across the street from the del Prado is the actual Alameda Park. My using my own photograph in *Stroll in Alameda Park* is the first time I have used my own figurative image. I suppose *Stroll in Alameda Park* is a self-portrait, like Rivera's. The central idea in *Stroll in Alameda Park* is to pit this nice, sensuous, velvety green—it's pretty, soft, fragile, and easily destroyed—against the cold steel. It's like real life. I like the confrontation created by the massiveness of this work. You have to deal with it, not fight back to get around it. But I am not looking for the viewer to form a gestalt about me. I am not looking for a narrative. This is obviously my stroll. Someone else can have another stroll in the same park or in a different park."



Diego Rivera, *Dream of a Sunday Afternoon in the Alameda*, 1948, Hotel del Prado, Mexico, D.F. (detail)





*Avenida Juarez*, 1989

The panels framing this ambiguous centerpiece are a study in contrasts. Countering the severity of the left panel of royal blue, the right panel contains an image, loosely sketched in charcoal and pencil on plywood, of a man and a woman in a romantic pose. While at first glance the drawing appears to be a unified image, it is in fact a compendium of two images the artist culled from *fotonovelas*, photographic cartoon books that are a popular, inexpensive form of entertainment in Mexico. Drake tilts this image, which was originally intended to be read horizontally, disrupting our expectation for predictable resolutions in the robust jostling of romance and business,

intimate and stranger, man and woman that nightly take place on Avenida Juarez. In this sense, the entire triptych is novelistic in approach. Read from left to right, it sequences contrasting impressions of the same scene, moving from abstractness to mystery, from mystery to representation. While the title *Avenida Juarez* suggests a description of place, the non-specific sensibility of Drake's imagery allows for varying personal interpretations, reinforcing and accepting a wide latitude of double meanings and opposites: day and night, positive and negative, dark and light, black and white.



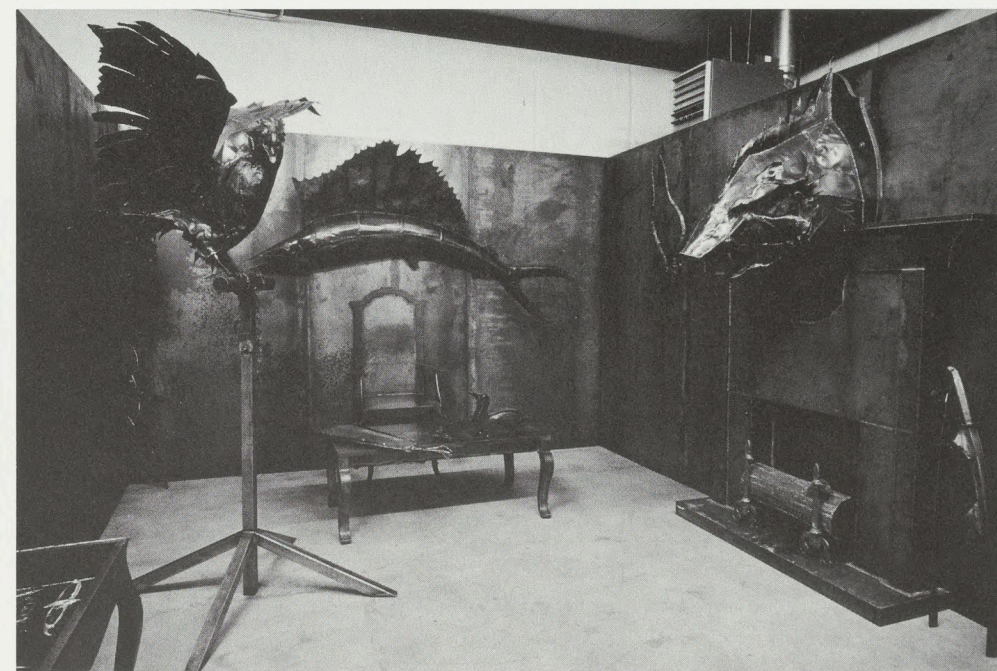
"Alameda Park is in Mexico City where we lived for a while when I was young. When I was about fourteen, we stayed at the Hotel del Prado. In the Hotel del Prado is a monumental mural by Diego Rivera. Part of the mural shows Rivera dressed as a boy, holding hands with a cartoon skeleton and surrounded by his wives and family. Many famous political figures are depicted. It's a very complex picture full of symbolism and political commentary. I used to sit, literally for hours, and stare at that mural and think: someday I am going to be an artist. The name of that painting is *Dream of a Sunday Afternoon in the Alameda*. Across the street from the del Prado is the actual Alameda Park. My using my own photograph in *Stroll in Alameda Park* is the first time I have used my own figurative image. I suppose *Stroll in Alameda Park* is a self-portrait, like Rivera's. The central idea in *Stroll in Alameda Park* is to pit this nice, sensuous, velvety green—it's pretty, soft, fragile, and easily destroyed—against the cold steel. It's like real life. I like the confrontation created by the massiveness of this work. You have to deal with it, not fight back to get around it. But I am not looking for the viewer to form a gestalt about me. I am not looking for a narrative. This is obviously my stroll. Someone else can have another stroll in the same park or in a different park."



Diego Rivera, *Dream of a Sunday Afternoon in the Alameda*, 1948, Hotel del Prado, Mexico, D.F. (detail)

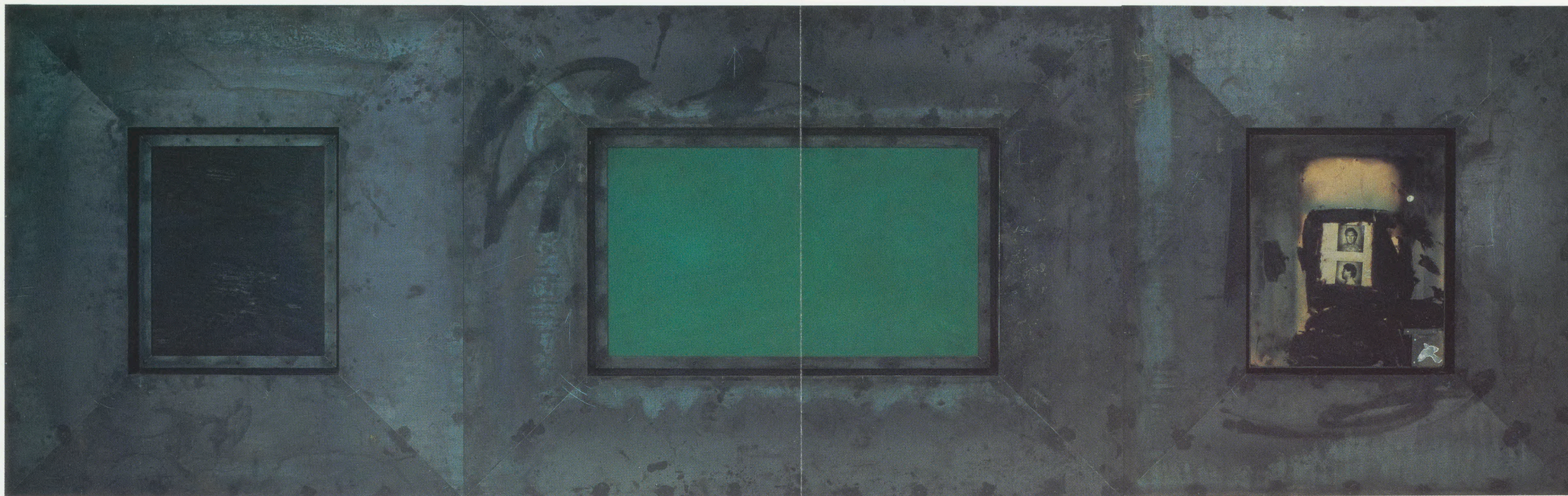
Diego Rivera's immense mural *Sueño de una tarde dominical en el Alameda Central*, 1948 (damaged in the 1985 Mexico City earthquake and since moved into a building inside Alameda Park), is a controversial synopsis of Rivera's poetic vision of Mexican history from the Spanish conquest to the 1940s. Drake's *Stroll in Alameda Park*, 1989, is compositionally arranged in the manner of an altarpiece triptych, with a large central panel winged by two smaller panels. Similar in concept to Rivera's mural, it encompasses a host of extremes within a macabre garden of earthly delights. The dominant central image is a completely abstract rectangle of solid, soft, emerald green pastel. Symbolic of the pristine, peaceful qualities of the park's lush grass, it concretizes an influential memory for Drake. He remembers Alameda Park as an oasis, both for the coolness its shade could offer, and for the mental stimulation such a prominent public meeting place afforded. Strikingly, this abstraction is a non-place; while compositionally prominent, it offers a suggestively neutral visual space that ameliorates or catalyzes the more specific details of the panels that frame it.

The ominous, roughly textured black vertical rectangle on the left counteracts notions of green as symbolic of a life-giving force, recalling some of the deathly luridness of the skeleton in Rivera's mural. Burning wood also has its roots in a more practical but no less deeply ingrained visual memory for Drake: often on his trips through the barrios of Juarez he has noticed marks on the outside walls of dwellings where inhabitants built fires for cooking or for warmth. Charring the walls that contain them, these fires leave a very unsettling but very human mark. Reflecting a human need, they also project danger: from time to time, Drake has noticed remnants of a home destroyed by this practice.



*The Trophy Room*, 1982





*Stroll in Alameda Park, 1989*

The right panel juxtaposes a double photograph of the artist with an image of a bird. These likenesses introduce more literal focal points into the general landscape of this complex memory/self-portrait. Drake's somber self-portrait, resembling both *la mica* (a local identification card) and a police mug shot, is surrounded by heavy slashes of roofing plastic; on one side it is bordered by a confessional text which, partially obscured, begins "I have...." His use of language here echoes Rivera's periodic incorporation of slogans, proverbs, and lines from popular *corridos* (street ballads) in his paintings. Mid-way up the right hand side of the panel is a bone-handled knife driven deeply into the upper right of the chipboard; it is a violent antithesis to the hopeful counterpoint of the bird that is framed by angle-iron braces in the lower right corner. Compartmentalized within this panel, Drake's grim visage, the bird, and the knife provide an additive, highly contradictory, tripartite vision of harmony and violence, a cyclical vision of life presented under the guise of an obscured self-portrait.

*"I am interested in what makes someone want to go out and kill another living thing and then bring home that evidence and put it in a predominant place in their home. The phenomenon of that aggressive act fascinates me."*



In 1982, Drake constructed a massive sculptural tableau entitled *The Trophy Room*. A paradigm of the artist's early concerns, the installation is a formidable evocation of a huntsman's room replete with the fetishistically replicated accoutrements of the successful hunt. Everything—furniture, weapons, and trophy heads—are fashioned from welded steel. Oppressively oversized, these objects effectively terrorize the viewers' sense of well-being and self control, forcing a reevaluation of the social and political ramifications of the urge for power and control.<sup>2</sup> However, *The Trophy Room* also recalls some of the unsettling magic of the beautiful castle in Jean Cocteau's film *La Belle et le bête*, 1946, implying that a spiritual power often lurks beneath disturbing surfaces.

*Headhunters*, 1989, is a transitional piece that moves from the aggressively physical black and white figuration of *The Trophy Room* to a subtler, more open-ended expression. The left panel of this diptych is comprised of a monumental charcoal

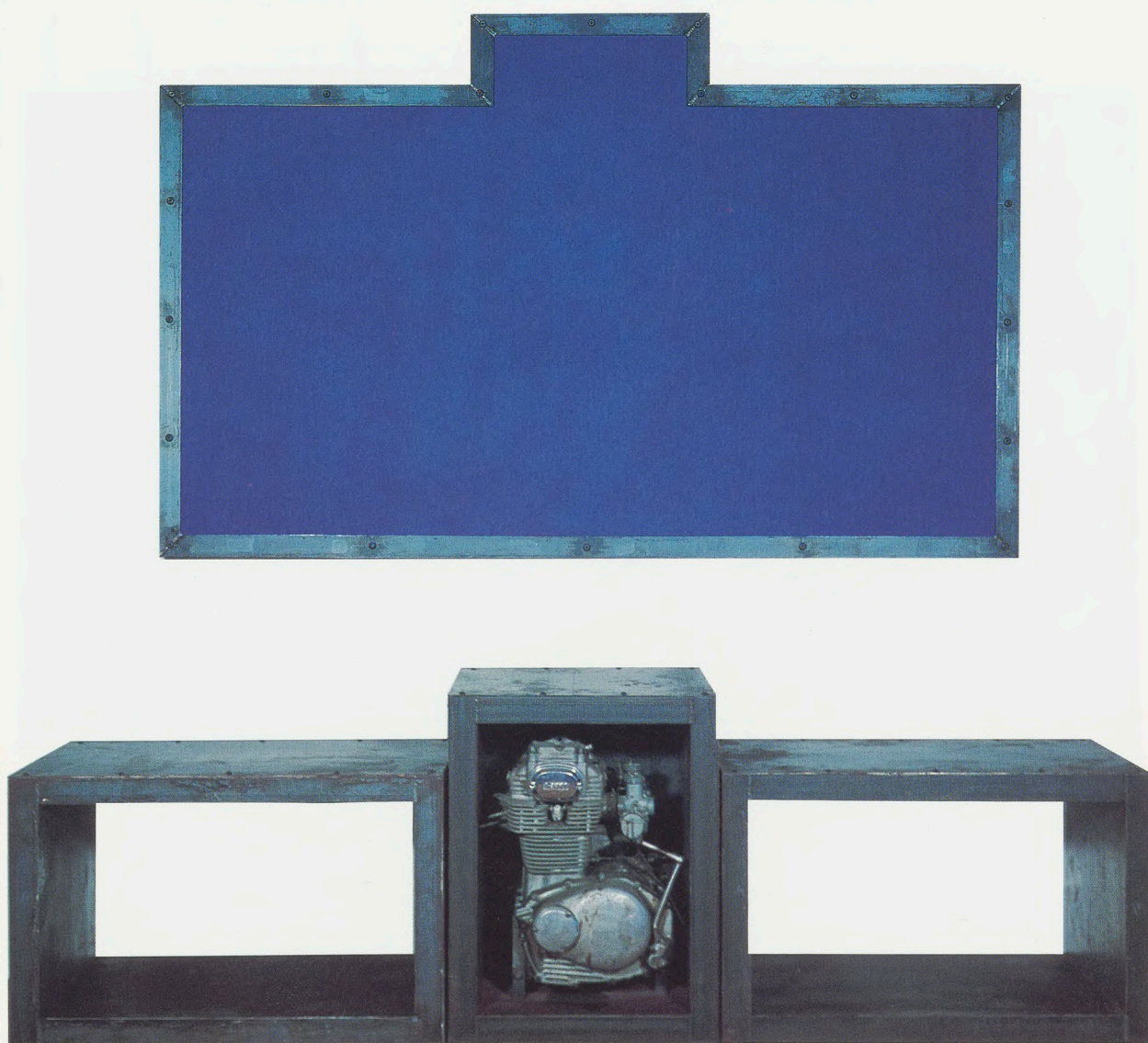


*Headhunters*, 1989



drawing on paper. The image, taken from a newspaper photograph of a Mexican political rally, appealed to Drake for its abundance of implied meanings: these aggressively postured men could be brokers at a stock market, part of an audience at a cock fight, participants in a political rally—in short, attendants at any event involving gain and loss. In Drake's words, "They share singularity. They're all hunting for human trophies, looking for heads." The tight symmetry of the right panel, emphasized by matching sets of antlers centered over a hunting bow, arrows, and a steel replication of one of Drake's household tables, offers a tableau that recalls some of the forbidding unreality of *The Trophy Room*.

In *Headhunters* and two other works in this exhibition which incorporate three-dimensional, furniture-like objects, Drake explores the mechanics and form of aggression within the context of social exchange. The motorcycle is a quintessentially male



*Blue Love Seat*, 1989

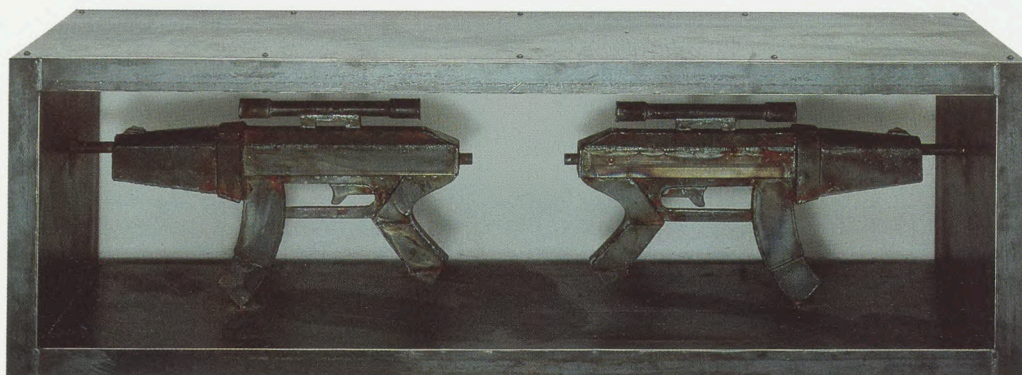
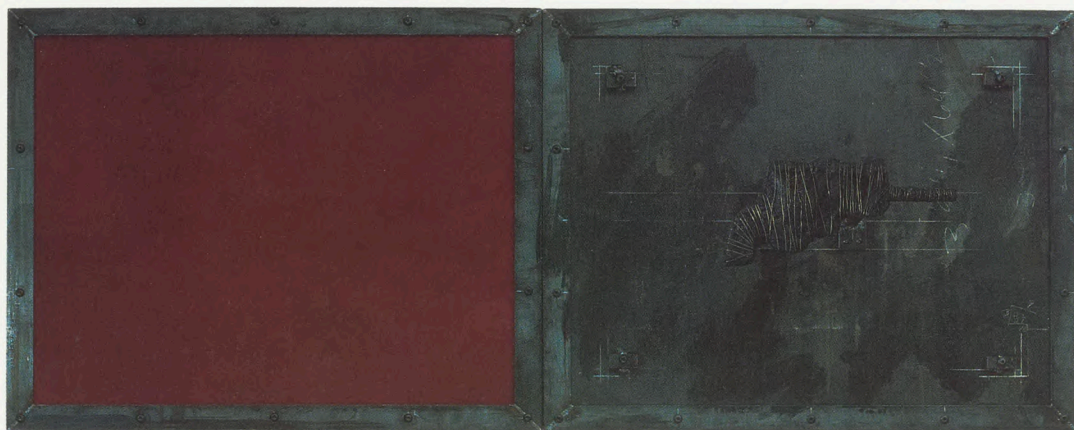


power symbol, and a motorcycle engine--the veritable heart of the machine--forms the centerpiece of *Blue Love Seat*, 1989. Encasing it within a functional (if not terribly comfortable) piece of furniture, Drake has upset our expectations that the engine be associated with power and aggression. "There is a romance associated with the motorcycle. In *Blue Love Seat*, although I intend the piece to refer to a more traditional arrangement of romance, I realize that no one could conceivably think of actually sitting in this arrangement, drinking coffee and having a nice conversation." The rich blue of the wall panel, on the other hand, complicates the masculine virility of this "love seat." Suggestive of both nocturnal sky and idealism, faith, or virtue, it mirrors the profile of the love seat in two dimensions. It also suggests a window, although whether one opening onto an interior, psychological vista or outward, onto an evening sky, Drake does not say.

*Red Gun*, 1989, also uses a basic furniture form as a springboard for commentary on social function. In this case Drake's bench houses double machine guns with barrels pointing in opposite directions, in a gesture of warning and danger. The wall diptych mounted above the bench pairs a red field that is both passionate and bloody in its implications with a gun that is disabled or disguised by being wrapped in black roofing fabric. Given Drake's upbringing in the culture of the West, guns offer a natural, albeit violent, cultural symbol. The violent exchanges between El Paso and Paso del Norte (now Juarez), reached a peak in the 1880s and 1890s, when scattered settlements sheltered the "dregs of humanity hiding out in the swamps and thickets, outcasts of three cultures; Indian, Mexican and Anglo."<sup>3</sup> This propensity toward violence is epitomized by men such as Dallas Stoudenmire, an El Paso marshal in the mid-1880s renowned for his murderous temper, and John Wesley Hardin, who killed 20 men between 1868 and 1878 before he was finally shot to death by an El Paso policeman in 1895. Unlike the Wild West of some slick 1940s Hollywood interpretation, El Paso's history evokes a desolate, almost disconsolate life charged by the landscape's constant demand for hard work in exchange for little reward. Although Drake does not hunt, and does not own guns, he is fascinated with their precisely engineered, well designed forms. Drake fabricates all the weapons incorporated in his works (with the exception of some of the knives) rather than employing casts from originals, or the guns themselves. He is preoccupied not with presenting the original, but with the idea of replicating the original to convey the plan of a weapon. "I think they have more energy and tension by having been made. I don't care if they are right or wrong in their details, the idea is that while it looks like the real thing, it is actually a symbol."

Words and music are malleable mediums, as are charcoal and pastel. Welded steel and wood, on the other hand, require a physical subjugation through cutting, casting, or tempering before realizing full usefulness. The full force of that physical process is evident in much of Drake's work. Steel is mottled with oil and other discoloration from heat; many panels contain the artist's fabrication notations in white pencil. Drake has incorporated the formal ideal of the monumental edifice, an idea most often associated with minimal artists such as Richard Serra or Donald Judd, as an overlay for an epic structure that mirrors the romanticism of such poems as Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, or Alfred Noyes' *The Highwayman*.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, the structure of his compositions shares the complex, contradictory plot twists of operatic theater, where the beauty of the interpreted event is revealed through a complex edifice based on a calculated structure of language, convention, metaphor, and emotion.





*Red Gun, 1989*

Drake's matter-of-fact juxtaposition of intimate content with industrial materials presented on such a large scale reinforces his fascination with the paradoxical nature of opposites. Pitting hard against soft, heavy against light, intimate content against public edifice, the violence of aggression against the implicit trust of human exchange, Drake envisions a cycle of human existence that is mirrored in the cycle of life on the border.

Terrie Sultan

Curator of Contemporary Art

1. All quotes are taken from a series of interviews with the artist conducted by the author in El Paso, Texas, June 14 through June 17, 1990.
2. For a detailed critique of *The Trophy Room* see Joe Gregory, "James Drake: Enclosures of Selfhood," *Artspace: Southwestern Contemporary Arts Quarterly*, Summer 1987. 34-36.
3. Leon Claire Metz, *The Shooters*. Mangan Press, El Paso, Texas (1976). 87.
4. Drake notes that both of these poems were early artistic influences.



## James Drake

James Drake was born in Lubbock, Texas in 1946. He received degrees from the Art Center College of Design, Los Angeles, California (BFA and MFA). He lives and works in El Paso, Texas.

### Selected one-person exhibitions:

- 1971 The University of Texas, El Paso, Texas
- 1976 Museo de Arte e Historia, Juarez, Mexico  
The Pavilion Art Gallery, Scottsdale, Arizona
- 1981 "New Visions," Amarillo Art Center, Amarillo, Texas  
Abilene Fine Arts Museum, Abilene, Texas  
Wichita Falls Museum and Art Center,  
Wichita Falls, Texas  
El Paso Museum of Art, El Paso, Texas
- 1982 El Paso Centennial Museum, University of Texas,  
El Paso, Texas  
Robert Speaker Gallery, Los Angeles, California  
Galveston Art Center on the Strand,  
Galveston, Texas
- 1983 Brown-Lupton Gallery, Texas Christian University,  
Fort Worth, Texas
- 1985 Texas Gallery, Houston, Texas  
Arthur Roger Gallery, New Orleans, Louisiana
- 1987 Fendrick Gallery, Washington, D.C.  
Adair Margo Gallery, El Paso, Texas
- 1988 "James Drake: The Border/La Frontera,"  
Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, Texas  
"James Drake: Border Incident,"  
Alternative Museum, New York, New York  
"James Drake: Sculpture," Barbara Fendrick  
Gallery, New York, New York  
"James Drake: Sculpture and Drawings,"  
The University of Texas, San Antonio, Texas
- 1989 La Jolla Museum Downtown, La Jolla Museum of  
Contemporary Art, La Jolla, California  
"James Drake: The Border/La Frontera,"  
Anderson Gallery, Virginia Commonwealth  
University, Richmond, Virginia  
"The Border/La Frontera," Palmer Museum of Art,  
Pennsylvania State University,  
University Park, Pennsylvania  
"New Lithographs," Tamarind Institute of  
Lithography, Albuquerque, New Mexico  
"New Work," Texas Gallery, Houston, Texas
- 1990 "James Drake: The Border/La Frontera,"  
Gardiner Art Gallery, Oklahoma State  
University, Stillwater, Oklahoma  
"James Drake: New Work," Adair Margo Gallery,  
El Paso, Texas  
"James Drake: New Drawings and Prints,"  
Fendrick Gallery, Washington, D.C.  
"James Drake: New Work 1989-1990,"  
Barbara Fendrick Gallery,  
New York, New York  
"James Drake: Place and Passage,"  
Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

### Selected group exhibitions:

- 1971 Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, California
- 1973 "Society of Art Center Alumni," Art Center College  
of Design, Los Angeles, California
- 1974 "Thirty-third Annual Art Exhibit," Jersey City Art  
Museum, Jersey City, New Jersey  
"Second New Hampshire International Graphics  
Annual," Hollis, New Hampshire  
"Fifth Annual Colorprint USA," Texas Tech  
University, Lubbock, Texas  
"Sixteenth Annual Exhibition of Prints and  
Drawings," Oklahoma Art Center,  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
- 1975 "International Biennial of Graphic Art," Museum of  
Modern Art, Ljubljana, Yugoslavia
- 1976 "Twenty-first Annual Sun Carnival Exhibition,"  
El Paso Museum of Art, El Paso, Texas  
"Primo Internazionale Biella Per L'Incisione,"  
Biella, Italy
- 1977 "Seventh Annual National Print and Drawing  
Exhibition," Minot State College,  
Minot, North Dakota
- 1978 Visual Arts Center of Alaska, Anchorage, Alaska
- 1979 "International Designer Craftsman," El Paso  
Museum of Art, El Paso, Texas  
"Made in Texas," Archer M. Huntington Gallery,  
University of Texas, Austin, Texas
- 1980 "Southwest Sculpture," Galveston Arts Center on  
the Strand, Galveston, Texas  
University Art Gallery, San Diego State University,  
San Diego, California  
"Copper II," University of Arizona Art Museum,  
Tucson, Arizona
- 1981 Lawndale Annex, Houston, Texas  
500 Exhibition Gallery, Dallas, Texas
- 1982 "Invitational '82," Longview Museum and Arts  
Center, Longview, Texas  
"Fabric and Fiber," Brown-Lupton Gallery, Texas  
Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas
- 1983 "Southern Fictions," Contemporary Arts Museum,  
Houston, Texas  
"1983 New Orleans Triennial," New Orleans  
Museum of Art, New Orleans, Louisiana
- 1984 "Three Dimensions," University of Texas,  
El Paso, Texas
- 1985 "Southwest '85," Museum of Fine Arts,  
Santa Fe, New Mexico
- 1986 "Third Western States Biennial," The Brooklyn  
Museum, Brooklyn, New York, traveling to:  
New Orleans Contemporary Art Center;  
Art Museum of South Texas, Corpus Christi,  
Texas; Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center;  
San Antonio Museum of Art; Yellowstone Fine  
Arts Center, Billings, Montana; Palm Springs  
Desert Museum; San Jose Museum of Art  
"1986 New Orleans Triennial," New Orleans  
Museum of Art, New Orleans, Louisiana  
"Personal Environments," Museum of Fine Arts,  
Santa Fe, New Mexico  
"Texas Artists," Texas Gallery, Houston, Texas



## Selected group exhibitions continued

- 1987 "Contemporary Texas Figurative Drawings,"  
Art Museum of South Texas,  
Corpus Christi, Texas  
"Third Coast Review: A Look at Art in Texas,"  
Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, Colorado
- 1988 "Selections from the Permanent Collection: Part II,"  
La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art,  
La Jolla, California  
"The Mayor's Invitational," El Paso Museum of Art,  
El Paso, Texas  
"The Mid-America Biennial," The Nelson-Atkins  
Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri  
"The Wall as Ground," The Bridge Center for  
Contemporary Art, El Paso, Texas  
"Memory," The University of Texas,  
Arlington, Texas
- 1989 "Awards in the Visual Arts 8," organized by  
Southeastern Center for Contemporary Arts,  
Winston-Salem, North Carolina, traveling to:  
The High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia;  
La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art,  
La Jolla, California; Henry Art Gallery,  
University of Washington, Seattle, Washington  
"Painted Stories and Other Narrative Art,"  
Laguna Gloria Art Museum, Austin, Texas  
"James Drake, Derek Boshier, John Torreanno,"  
Arthur Roger Gallery, New Orleans, Louisiana  
"A Century of Sculpture in Texas 1889-1989,"  
Archer M. Huntington Gallery,  
University of Texas, Austin, Texas  
"Drawings by Texas Sculptors," Amarillo Art  
Center, Amarillo, Texas
- 1990 "Tradition and Innovation: A Museum Celebration  
of Texas Art," Museum of Fine Arts,  
Houston, Texas  
"Texas Figurative Drawings," Dallas Museum of Art,  
Dallas, Texas  
"Center for Contemporary Arts Invitational,"  
Center for Contemporary Art,  
Santa Fe, New Mexico  
"Art and the Law," organized by  
West Publishing Co., St. Paul, Minnesota,  
traveling to: Minneapolis Convention Center,  
Minneapolis, Minnesota; State of Illinois  
Center, Chicago, Illinois; State Capitol of  
Minnesota, St. Paul, Minnesota  
"Drawing the Line," Barbara Fendrick Gallery,  
New York, New York

## Awards:

- 1988 Award in the Visual Arts, Southeastern Center for  
Contemporary Art  
Mid-America Arts Alliance, National Endowment  
for the Arts Grant
- 1989 National Endowment for the Arts Grant and  
Travel Fellowship  
Artist in Residence,  
La Napoule Foundation, France

## Selected bibliography:

- Jane Addams Allen, *Awards in the Visual Arts 8*,  
(exh. cat., Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art,  
Winston-Salem, North Carolina, 1989), 32-39.
- Ferrell Beck, "The Function of Particular Memory,"  
*Artweek*, May 23, 1987.
- David Bell, "Southwest '85," *Art in America*, September  
1985.
- Michael Brenson, "How the Myths and Violence of the  
West Inspires Its Artists," *The New York Times*,  
Art View, June 15, 1986.
- Annette Carlozzi, "Fifty Texas Artists," *Chronicle  
Books*, 1986.
- Barbara Cartwright, "James Drake, Painting and  
Sculpture," *Artweek*, March 1976.
- Linda L. Cathcart, *1983 New Orleans Triennial*,  
(exh. cat., New Orleans Museum of Art,  
Louisiana, 1983).
- \_\_\_\_\_ and Edward Ruscha, *Southwest '85*  
(exh. cat., Fine Arts Museum, Santa Fe,  
New Mexico, 1985).
- Judith Christensen, "James Drake at the La Jolla  
Museum Downtown," *Art Coast, Contemporary  
Art West and East*, May/June 1989. 82.
- William A. Fagaly and Dr. Monroe K. Spears, *Southern  
Fictions*, (exh. cat., Contemporary Arts Museum,  
Houston, Texas, 1983).
- Joe Gregory, "James Drake: Enclosures of Selfhood,"  
*ArtSpace*, Summer 1987.
- Glenn Harper, "Award in the Visual Arts 8," *Arts  
Magazine*, July/August 1989. 47.
- Patricia D. Hendricks and Becky Duval Reese,  
*A Century of Sculpture in Texas 1889-1989*,  
(exh. cat., Archer M. Huntington Gallery,  
University of Texas, Austin, Texas, 1989).
- Gerrit Henry, "James Drake at Barbara Fendrick," *Art  
in America*, April 1989. 264-265.
- Patricia C. Johnson, "Artist Fills Poetic Works with  
Tragedy," *Houston Chronicle Magazine*,  
January 1990. 1F.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Tradition and Innovation," *Houston  
Chronicle Magazine*, February 1990. 6.
- David Joselit, "Living on the Border," *Art in America*,  
December 1989. 120.
- Charlotta Kotik, *Third Western States Exhibition*,  
(exh. cat., The Brooklyn Museum, New York, 1986).
- Janet Kutner and Tom Livesay, *Made in Texas*,  
(exh. cat., Archer M. Huntington Gallery,  
University of Texas, Austin, Texas, 1979).
- Jana Vander Lee, "Lone Star Sculptors," *International  
Sculpture*, June/July 1985.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Texas Sculpture," *ArtSpace*, Winter  
1982-83.
- William Peterson, "Raft of the Medusa," *ArtSpace*,  
November/December 1989.
- David Turner, *Personal Environments*,  
(exh. cat., Museum of Fine Arts, Santa Fe,  
New Mexico, 1986).
- Marilyn Zeitlin, "Taking Sides: Art on the Border," in  
*1986 New Orleans Triennial*, (exh. cat., New Orleans  
Museum of Art, Louisiana, 1986).
- \_\_\_\_\_, *James Drake: The Border/La Frontera*,  
(exh. cat., Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston,  
Texas, 1988).



## Checklist

height x width x depth

### *Avenida Juarez*, 1989

steel, wood, paper, plywood, pastel, roofing fabric, various objects

left panel: 95 x 84 x 4 inches

center panel: 95 x 84 x 16 1/4 inches

right panel: 95 x 84 x 4 inches

overall: 95 x 252 1/2 x 16 1/4 inches

### *Blue Love Seat*, 1989

motorcycle engine, steel, paper, pastel

top panel: 46 x 72 x 2 1/2 inches

table: 26 x 20 x 18 inches

two benches (each): 20 x 32 x 18 inches

### *Headhunters*, 1989

paper, charcoal, steel

left panel: 108 x 72 x 4 3/8 inches

right panel: 115 x 60 x 12 inches

object: 28 1/4 x 34 x 17 1/2 inches

overall: 115 x 132 x 17 1/2 inches

### *Puente Negra*, 1989

steel, wood, paper, pastel, plastic roofing cement

left panel: 46 x 62 1/2 x 4 1/2 inches

right panel: 46 x 62 1/2 x 4 1/2 inches

overall: 46 x 125 x 4 1/2 inches

### *Red Gun*, 1989

pastel, paper, steel, roofing cloth

top panel: 30 x 76 x 10 inches

bench: 21 x 64 x 16 inches

### *Stroll in Alameda Park*, 1989

steel, wood, paper, pastel, plywood, chipboard, plastic roofing cement, xerox, charcoal, hunting knife

left panel: 80 1/2 x 74 1/2 x 4 inches

center panel: 80 1/2 x 106 1/2 x 11 inches

right panel: 80 1/2 x 74 1/2 x 4 inches

overall: 80 1/2 x 256 x 11 inches

All works are courtesy of the artist and

Fendrick Gallery, Washington, D.C.

Barbara Fendrick Gallery, New York, New York

Adair Margo Gallery, El Paso, Texas

Arthur Roger Gallery, New Orleans, Louisiana

Texas Gallery, Houston, Texas

### Photo credits:

Dirk Bakker: *Dream of a Sunday Afternoon in the Alameda*, 1948

Judy Cooper: *Blue Love Seat*, 1989

Vallarie and Arturo Enriquez Vantage Point Visual Studio: *The Trophy Room*, 1982;

*Juarez/El Paso*, 1986-88; *Raft of the Medusa*, 1988;

*Avenida Juarez*, 1989; *Headhunters*, 1989;

*Puerta Negra*, 1989; *Red Gun*, 1989;

*Stroll in Alameda Park*, 1989



